

73-5700

Executive Registry

19 OCT 1973

73-66661

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
 VIA: Deputy Director for Operations
 FROM: Chief, East Asia Division
 SUBJECT: Assessment of the New Thai Cabinet.

1. Action Requested: For your information, no action required.

2. Background:

A. General

All but two of the fifteen new Thai Cabinet Ministers are western-educated (see also [redacted] 25X1 [redacted] Five are men of the law, as is the new Prime Minister himself. Most have been involved in academia, either at Thammasat or Chulalongkorn Universities, the two most important institutions of higher learning in Thailand. With few exceptions, they represent one of the more prestigious, professional, honest, competent group of high-minded and intellectual men available in Thailand today. There is little evidence of their selection being based upon political obligations to any specific power base, unless it would be to the Royal Family. With the possible exception of Air Marshal THAWI, virtually all have reputations for being top men in their respective fields. Civilians predominate by far, and at least half of the Cabinet Ministers have royal links. The Cabinet as a whole appears to be monarchy-oriented, and is the closest thing to civilian/technocrat rule since 1932. Given the traditional Thai student attitudes towards learned men, academicians and intellectuals, the Cabinet selection should prove highly acceptable to the student element. This coupled with the fact that these men are held so highly by the King should enhance their immediate stayability.

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